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E-MAN™

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℅FIRST COMICS,
1014 DAVIS STREET,
EVANSTON, ILLINOIS 60201

Dear Mike,

I've just finished reading E-Man #8. I think the thing that's impressed me most about your book is the relationship between Nova and Alec. The changes that have taken place are very true to life. Each character is well defined but always changing; different situations bring on different behavior.

And I believe you've brought out a precious quality in Nova: the ability to change her opinions, ideas, mind and lord knows what else on a moment's notice and feel justified in doing so. Nova is probably the strongest female character in comics today.

Dennis Payne
724 McKella St.
Peterboro, Ontario

Hi, Guys:

Well, you finally got me to write a letter about E-Man. I've been enjoying each issue since #2 (I've since acquired #1). One small glitch in #8 — the female impersonators that I've known don't normally wear women's clothing on the street, unless they're also transvestites. I know it was necessary for the plot to advance in the way it did, but it still bothers me.

Actually, the main reason I set out on this epistolic journey was a detail on the last page: the newspaper in the first panel. Who's the Prairie Home Companion fan? Or is he a fan of David Letterman? I, too, saw Garrison Keiller on that show last May. I discovered PHC about two years ago and have been a rabid fan ever since — much the same way I have been a fan of E-Man's second incarnation.

Brett Bydairk
114 S. Waccamaw
Columbia, SC 29205

Joe's the Garrison Keiller fan — he's heard him on radio and he saw the David Letterman show in question, although Joe has yet to read the Prairie Home Companion.

Sorry I cut your references to your local police department, Brett, but, hey, you're the guy who has to live there.

Dear E-Men:

Gee, I can't wait to see next year's Overprice Street Guide and find E-Man #8 listed as a transvestite issue.

Actually you guys handled Les pretty good. If he stays as a regular, please portray him as a straight fellow with a girlfriend. Not as a flaming queer.

Since you guys like to satirize people in the industry, I'm wondering, who is the transvestite in the comic book industry?

John Brittan
11 Fleetwood Dr.
Daly City, CA 94015

Your last question implies there's only one.

Actually, I'm more curious to see if Bob Overstreet lists **E-Man** *#4 as the "Overprice Satire" issue.*

Mike,

The funny thing is, Mad Wax is probably the nearest thing to a traditional comic book supervillain this incarnation of E-Man has ever faced.

What happened?

Of course, Leslie Faltz gave the book it's distinctive touch. If Mauser was an average private eye (he's already proven he's not, but comics operate on a suspension of disbelief, and I already believe Mauser is a Private Eye) he might consider a female impersonator a good addition to his staff.

Barrentown, Pennsylvania? Pennsylvania? Why does everyone pick on Pennsylvania? Whatever happened to the good old days with jokes about New Jersey, Walla Walla, Washington, and "sunny downtown" Burbank!

Mike Sopp
438 W. 32
Erie, PENNSYLVANIA
16508

Dear Messrs. Gold, Staton, and Pasko,

I was deeply disappointed with E-Man #8. The story was tiresome and boring; not even the beautiful artwork could make up for it. This issue had nothing but the dreaded "superhero vs. supervillain" concept. Let's see some more parody in the book. Spoof the New Teen Titans, Camelot 3000, or Ronin. I'd also like to see Jon Sable in your comic (I can see him now talking to Mickey ... ahm ... Michael Mauser saying "Hey, nice gun, buddy."

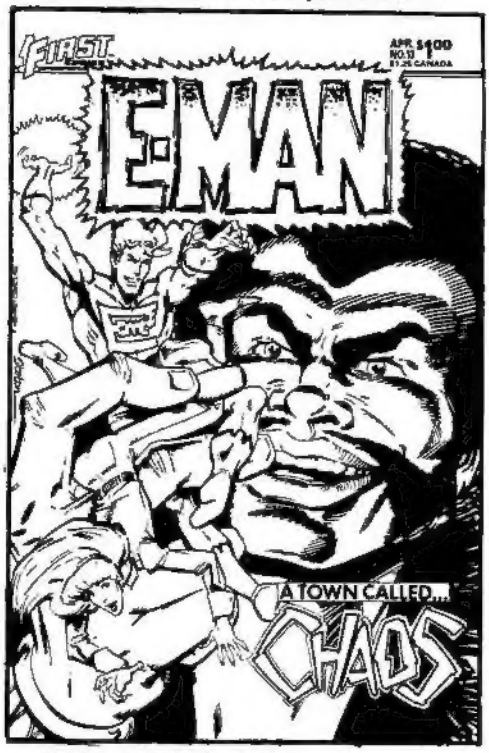
Anyway, I know this is one not-so-good issue to all the others and I also know I'm probably blowing this all out of proportion, but I still think your book is great.

Michael Brough
1903 South Park
Kingsville, TX 78363

Jon Sable won't be appearing in **E-Man** *directly for some time, if at all, Michael ... although you'll find an interesting "Sable connection" coming up before you know it.*

As for satirizing our friends among the opposition ... well, the next long-promised spoof is also coming up real soon.

But if it's a cross-over you want ...



NEXT MONTH E-Man takes on his greatest challenge yet as he ventures to Cynosure for a metamorphosical fight to the finish with Chaos, Prince of Madness!

— Mike Gold

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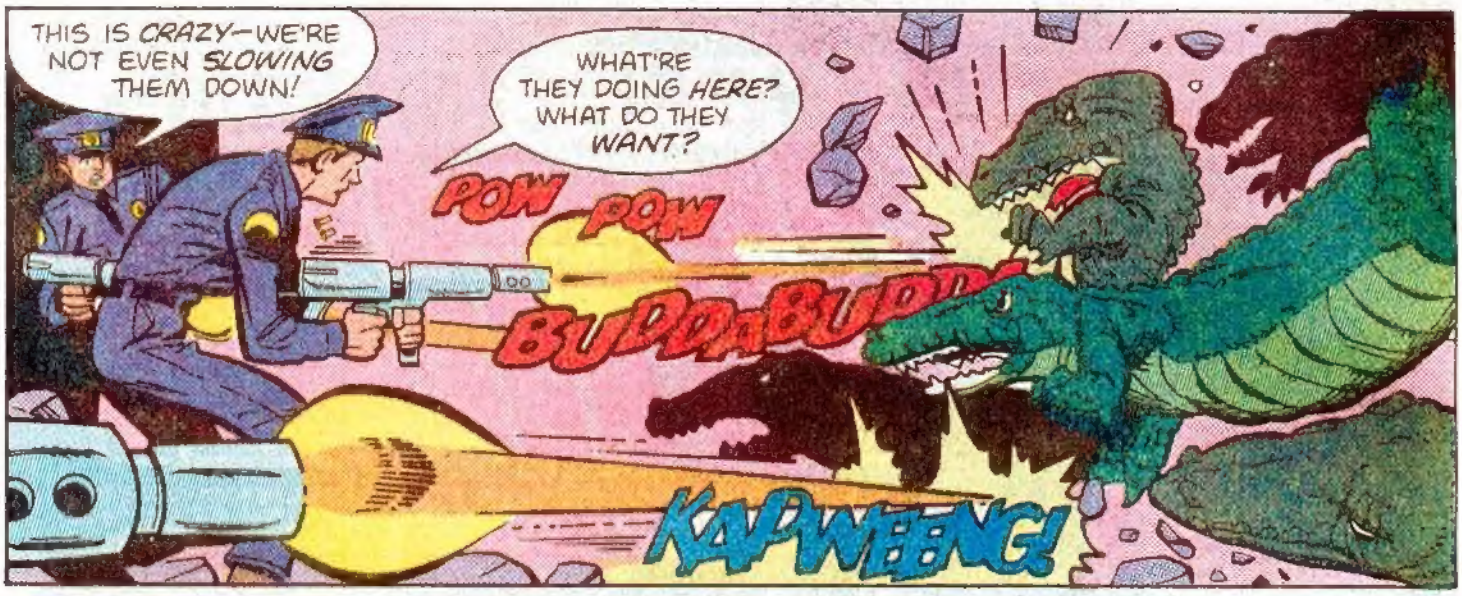
A FIRST COMICS PUBLISHING PRODUCTION

THE MANHATTAN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTE FOR WAYWARD WOMEN.
AND TODAY, ONE OF THE INMATES HAS VISITORS!
the electrifying--
Eman
created by JOE STATON and NICOLA CUTI
WHAT THE-? GATORS?!? HUNDREDS OF 'EM!
GET THE RIOT GUNS UP HERE- FAST!
THE GUARDS ARE USED TO DEALING WITH ASSORTED MINOR MISCREANTS...
THEY CERTAINLY ARE NOT PREPARED FOR...
The SEWER of DOOM!
WRITTEN AND PENCILLED BY
JOE STATON
INKED BY RICK BURCHETT
LETTERED BY KEN BRUZENAK
COLORED BY WENDY FIORE
EDITED BY MIKE GOLD


THIS IS CRAZY—WE'RE NOT EVEN SLOWING THEM DOWN!
WHAT'RE THEY DOING HERE? WHAT DO THEY WANT?
POW
POW
BUDDABUDD
KAPWEENG!

IN THE PRISON LAUNDRY, TYGER LILI MAY HAVE THE ANSWER...
AH, IT SEEMS TIME FOR ME TO GO!
POW

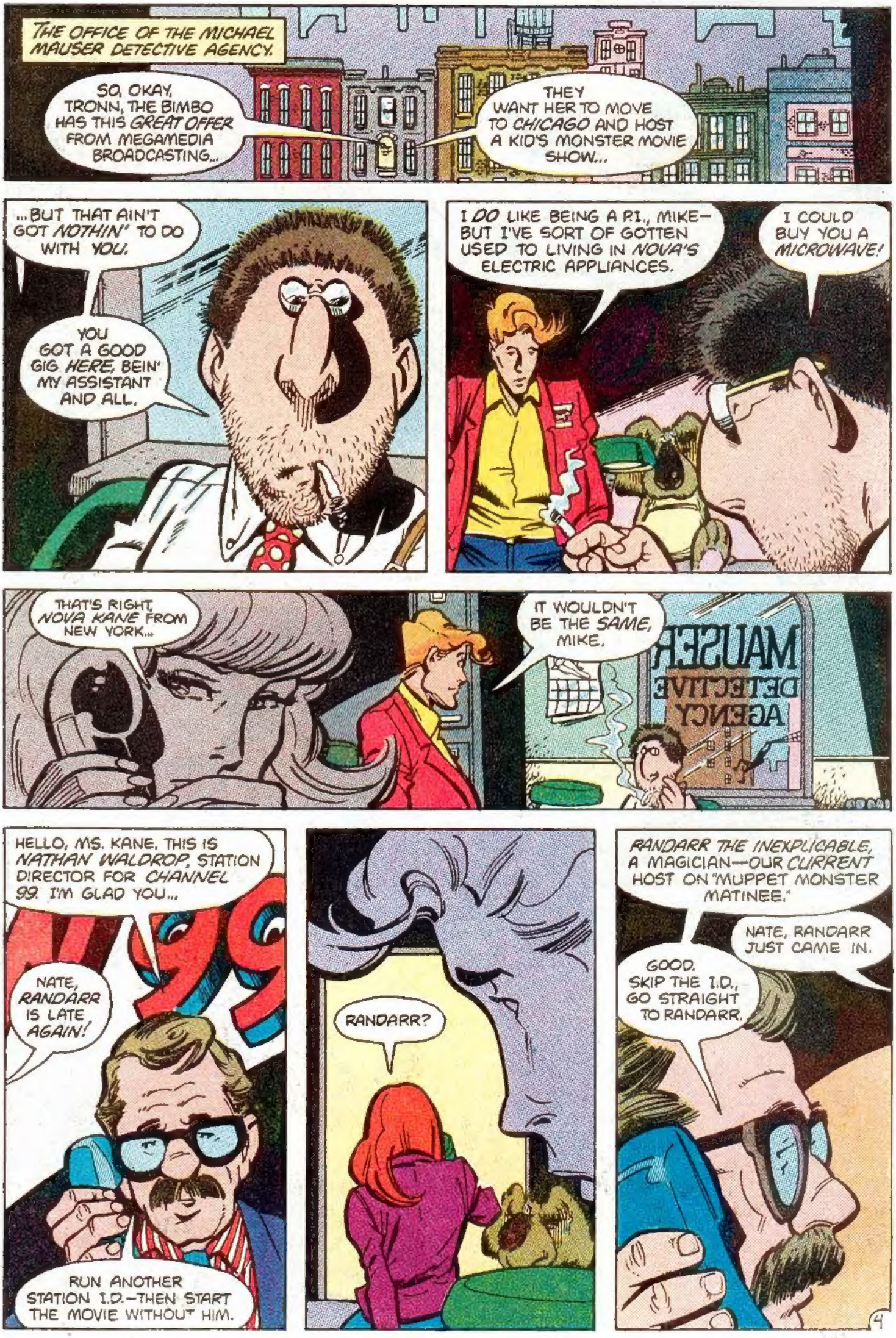
WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE! THERE'S TOO MANY OF THEM!

ONLY PLACE LEFT IS THE LAUNDRY!

WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING, LILI? GET BACK IN THERE!

STUPID MAN! DO YOU HOPE TO STOP A TRAINED MISTRESS OF THE MARTIAL ARTS?
CHUNK!
NY DEPT. OF WAYWARD

GAK! CHOKE! SOMEBODY STOP HER!
CHUNK!
BUT THE REMAINING GUARDS SOON FALL BEFORE THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYGER LILI!
AH, MY FRIENDS! I KNEW YOU WOULD COME- THE REVOLUTION CANNOT BE STOPPED!
NOW, WE MUST LEAVE, QUICKLY, BEFORE OTHERS ARRIVE!
AS SUDDENLY AS IT BEGAN, IT IS OVER. A SOUND OF FALLING RUBBLE, A DISTANT SPLASH, AND THEY ARE GONE.
KOWALSKI, DID YOU SEE A BUNCH'A ALLIGATORS JUST BREAK IN AND RUN OFF WITH THAT CHINESE WOMAN?
UH...YEAH, SARGE...I THINK SO...
GOOD, THEN PUT IT IN YOUR REPORT.
'CAUSE I SURE AIN'T GONNA PUT IT IN MINE.
ONCE AGAIN YOU CAPITALIST OEVILS HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO THWART TYGER LILI!
NOW I AM FREE!


THE OFFICE OF THE MICHAEL MAUSER DETECTIVE AGENCY.
SO, OKAY, TRONN, THE BIMBO HAS THIS GREAT OFFER FROM MEGAMEDIA BROADCASTING...
THEY WANT HER TO MOVE TO CHICAGO AND HOST A KID'S MONSTER MOVIE SHOW...
...BUT THAT AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH YOU.
YOU GOT A GOOD GIG HERE, BEIN' MY ASSISTANT AND ALL.
I DO LIKE BEING A P.I., MIKE— BUT I'VE SORT OF GOTTEN USED TO LIVING IN NOVA'S ELECTRIC APPLIANCES.
I COULD BUY YOU A MICROWAVE!
THAT'S RIGHT, NOVA KANE FROM NEW YORK...
IT WOULDN'T BE THE SAME, MIKE.
MAUSER DETECTIVE AGENCY
HELLO, MS. KANE. THIS IS NATHAN WALDROP, STATION DIRECTOR FOR CHANNEL 99. I'M GLAD YOU...
NATE, RANDARR IS LATE AGAIN!
RUN ANOTHER STATION I.D.—THEN START THE MOVIE WITHOUT HIM.
RANDARR?
RANDARR THE INEXPLICABLE, A MAGICIAN—OUR CURRENT HOST ON "MUPPET MONSTER MATINEE."
NATE, RANDARR JUST CAME IN.
GOOD. SKIP THE I.D., GO STRAIGHT TO RANDARR.
4

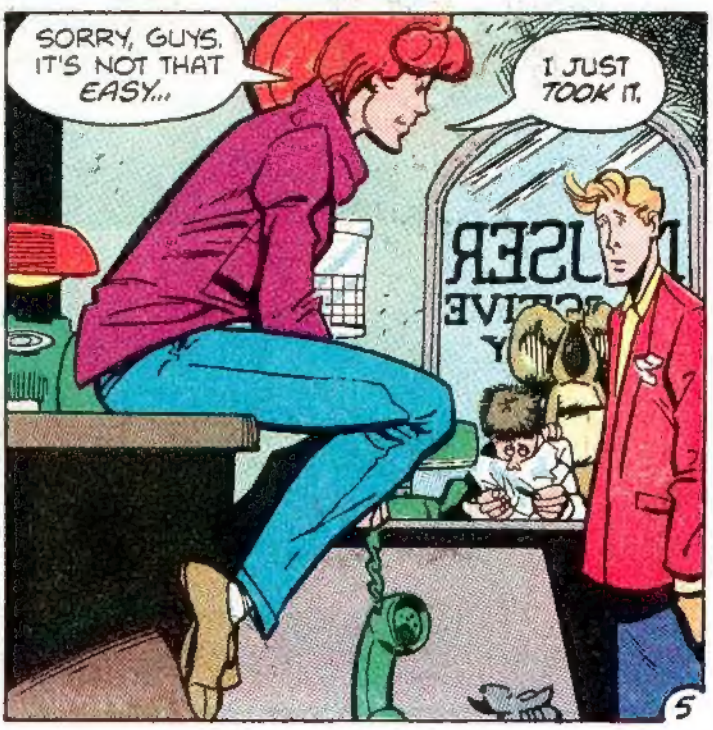
MS. KANE, WE'VE REVIEWED YOUR TEST VIDEO--
WHAT'S RANDARR UP TO?
BUT, TO BE TRUTHFUL, I MADE UP MY MIND ABOUT YOU SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, ON A TRIP TO NEW YORK.
I WAS TOTALLY TAKEN BY YOUR ACT AT THE MOIST PALMS CLUB--THE ROUTINE WITH THE PECULIAR ORANGE SNAKE...

...AND I FELT YOU COULD BE JUST WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR--THE ANGLE TO CAPTURE A LARGER SHARE OF THE TEEN MARKET--
DID YOU TELL RANDARR HE COULD DO THE ELECTRIC CHICKEN ACT?

ARE YOU KIDDING? NO!
WELL, HE'S DOING IT!
MS. KANE, I'LL HAVE TO CALL YOU BACK.

OH MY GOD!
CRACKLE
SNAP
POP!
HE'S ELECTROCUTED HIMSELF ON CAMERA--AGAIN!
POW
SIZZLE
EMERGENCY POWER, QUICK!
YOW!
ZZZZZZZZT!
CALL THE FIRE DEPARTMENT!
BLINK BLINK BLINK

LOOK, IT AIN'T GOOD FOR YOU TO FOLLOW HER AROUND LIKE A WET PUPPY.
WELL, MAYBE SHE WON'T TAKE THE JOB, AND I WON'T HAVE TO DECIDE...


SORRY, GUYS. IT'S NOT THAT EASY...
I JUST TOOK IT.

IT IS GOOD TO BE BACK IN UNIFORM AS COMMANDER ZHONG OF THE COMMUNO-SOCIALIST WORKER'S PARTY OF GREATER MACAO.
WELL, THAT'S JES' FINE. BUT WHAT WE GONE DO 'BOUT E-MAN TAKIN' OUR NUCLEAR RAY MACHINE?
Variety
RICK BAKER IN "RETURN OF BONZO"
GARY COLEMAN "SON OF CARRIE"
E-MAN AND THAT WRETCHED MAUSER CREATURE MAY HAVE CAUSED A TEMPORARY SET-BACK--
--HELPING THE TRAITOR WING FAT AND SEIZING OUR BLUEPRINTS AND THE ONLY WORKING MODEL.*
*ISSUE #9--MIKE.
BUT, FOLLOWING YOUR ORDERS, MY TECHNICIANS ARE MODIFYING ANOTHER DEVICE TO SERVE IN ITS PLACE,
AND IT WILL PROVIDE A MOST POETIC FORM OF VENGEANCE AGAINST THE IMPUDENT ENERGY MAN HIMSELF!
EXCELLENT. AND I DO HOPE THIS DEE-VICE WILL DO THE JOB.
I WILL NOT FAIL THIS TIME. SOON, OUR ANCIENT RACES WILL BE RESTORED TO THEIR PROPER PLACES OF POWER!

SHORTLY, IN ANOTHER PART OF THE SEWER...
IT HAS NOT BEEN DIFFICULT TO ADAPT OUR ELECTROMAGNETIC CYCLOTRON.
WITHIN IT, AN ENERGY FIELD OF SUFFICIENT INTENSITY-ROTATED AT TREMENDOUS VELOCITIES--WILL BECOME UNSTABLE AND EXPLODE IN A BURST OF SPECIFIC GAMMA RADIATION.
THIS WILL CLEANSE THE CONTINENT OF ITS CURRENT INADEQUATE INHABITANTS SO THAT WE MAY MAKE BETTER USE OF IT.
ALL THAT IS NEEDED NOW IS THE ENERGY FIELD--E-MAN HIMSELF!
I DON'T HARDLY THINK THAT WILL BE ANY PROBLEM AT ALL.
I'VE LIVED BY MY WITS IN THESE CITY SEWERS A GOOD LONG WHILE.
AND IF I CAN'T SUCKER THAT SUPER CRITTER DOWN HERE, MY NAME AIN'T
BIG AL!
7

BACK AT STREET LEVEL, A SOMEWHAT CONFUSED ALEC TRONN TRIES TO WALK OFF HIS PROBLEMS.
WHAT'LL I DO IN CHICAGO IF I GO WITH NOVA?
WHERE'LL TEDDY GO?
I GUESS I CAN ALWAYS BE A SUPERHERO, BUT I WOULDN'T FEEL RIGHT BEING A PRIVATE EYE WITHOUT MIKE.
WHOOP! SOMETHING FISHY GOING ON OVER THERE!
IF JON SABLE WERE HERE YOU WOULDN'T GET AWAY WITH THIS!
WELL, HE AIN'T, SO FORK OVER THE CASH.
WOULD YOU SETTLE FOR E-SQUID?
URK!
THANKS, E-MAN! I FORGOT YOU WERE IN TOWN, TOO.
NO PROBLEM. JUST GLAD TO BE OF HELP.

JEEZ, MAYBE I'LL BE BETTER KNOWN IN CHICAGO. HERE, PEOPLE DON'T EVEN REMEM--UH-OH!
YOU'VE GOT MY PURSE! LET ME GO!
NOT JUST YET, SISTER! NOT JUST YET!
GOING UP!
OH NO- IT'S THAT E-GUY!
THE FIRE ESCAPE IS AS FAR AS YOU GO, MISS...
...BUT I'VE GOT A PRESSING APPOINTMENT DOWN IN THE ALLEY!
KHOOOMP!
BACK ON THE GROUND.
OH, THANK YOU, E-MAN!
SMACK
SORRY, I'VE GOT TO RUN, BUT I'M LATE FOR MY SELF-DEFENSE CLASS.
WELL, THERE'S PLENTY OF WORK FOR A SUPERHERO IN THIS TOWN...
EEEEEEEE
BUT IT DOES GET A LITTLE TEDIOUS AT TIMES.

HELP! LET ME GO!
WHAT TH--TWO GUYS IN TRENCHCOATS KIDNAPPING A LITTLE OLD LADY--?
AND DRAGGING HER DOWN AN OPEN MANHOLE?
HELP! NOOOO! HELP!
I'VE HEARD OF THE CRIMINAL UNDERWORLD, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS!
THEY CAME DOWN HERE..BUT WHERE DID THEY GO?
WELL, THAT ANSWERS THAT QUESTION!
EEEE

SOMETHING FUNNY ABOUT THOSE GUYS...
THEY HAD AWFULLY LONG NOSES...
AND I COULD HAVE SWORN ONE OF THEM HAD A TAIL!
BLiP
BLiP
BLiP
NAH! THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.
YIII

THIS CHANNEL 99 JOB COULD BE MY BIG BREAK, MAUSER. DANCING BARELY PAYS THE RENT.
AND I COULD STILL GO TO SCHOOL.
MAUSER DETECTIVE AGENCY
THAT'S ALL GREAT FOR YOU, BUT WHAT'S IT GOT TA DO WITH TRONN?
WITH ALEC-?
WE'RE AH...HE'S...UM... I MEAN...
WHAT I MEAN IS THAT I LOVE HIM.
AGENCY
AND I DON'T WANT TO LOSE HIM--
--TO YOU OR ANYBODY OR ANYTHING ELSE
NAH, YOU JUST--
MAUSER, YOU ONCE TOLD ALEC YOU'RE NOT A CROOK...
AND YOU FINALLY ADMITTED I'M NOT A HOOKER...
SINCE WE'RE ALL NOT SOMETHING, LET'S FIGURE HE'S NOT AS DUMB AS WE TREAT HIM...
AND WE'LL LET HIM MAKE UP HIS OWN MIND!

UNFORTUNATELY, E-MAN IS A BIT PREOCCUPIED...
--TRAPPED IN TYGER LILI'S ELECTROMAGNETIC CYCLOTRON, SPINNING UNCONTROLLABLY--AT VELOCITIES APPROACHING THE SPEED OF LIGHT!
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
WHUP
SOON, THE ENERGY THAT WAS E-MAN WILL REACH CRITICAL MASS, AND THE CHAIN REACTION WILL BEGIN.
BY JING! I JUST LOVES THE NOTION OF THAT MEDDLIN' FOOL BEIN' AS HELPLESS AS A LI'L CATERPIGGLE!
AND HE'S GOING TO DO ALL OUR WORK FER US, TOO
HE WILL BE OUR GAMMA RADIATION FIELD!
AND THE DEGENERATE CAPITALISTS WILL DIE-- MAKING ROOM FOR THE SOCIO-ANARCHIST PEOPLES' PARTY OF GREATER MACAO!
UH, GEE, BOSS, I THOUGHT IT WAS 'SPOSED TO KILL ALL DUH HUMANS SO'S WE COULD TAKE OVER.
WHAT?
13

OH, WELL...
GRAB HER!
THAT'S RIGHT, LIL. I GOT IT ALL FIGGERED OUT REAL METHODICAL LIKE.
I HAS MADE SOME MODIFICATIONS TO YER DEE-VICE. AND I'M AFRAID YER OLEOGARCHIC GUMMINT TAKEOVER WILL HAVE TO BE POSTPONED-- PERMANENTLY!
YOU SEE, THE GAMMA FIELD GENERATED BY OUR FRIEN' E-MAN WILL INDEED KILL ALL HUMANS, MAYHAPS ALL MAMMALS, ON EARTH!
BUT IT WILL ALSO MUTATE ALL REPTILES TO A HIGHER STATE OF INTELLIGENCE!!!
BEIN' HIGHLY EE-VOLVED ALREADY, I WILL BECOME THE BIGGEST AND BRIGHTEST VARMINT THEY IS!
"AND I WILL RULE THE EARTH!"

AND NOW, LILI, EVEN THOUGH YOU DO GOT PERTY BROWN SPECKLE EYEBALLS, I'M AFRAID YOU'LL BE THE FIRST CASUALTY!
REPTILLIAN ABERRATION! DO YOU THINK I WILL LET YOU KILL ALL HUMANS?
THWAK
GAK!
OOOGI
GAGHH!
THUNK
NOW I'M MAD!
YOU MADE ME SWALLOW MY SEE-GAR!
AND WHEN I GETS MAD, I EATS THINGS!
WHUP
TRAPPED, ROTATING MADLY, E-MAN CAN ONLY WATCH HELPLESSLY AS TWO OF THE STRANGEST OPPONENTS OF ALL TIME SQUARE OFF.

LILI ZHONG WAS TRAINED BY THE MOST ACCOMPLISHED MARTIAL MASTERS OF MACAO.
ONCE, SHE CRIPPLED TEN TAIWANESE CONSTABLES- WITH HER HANDS BOUND!
THUNK!
THUD!
CHOP!
WHAK!
LIL' FOOL! DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN DEFEAT A MUTANT ALLIGATOR?
HE'S RIGHT! THERE'S NO WAY I CAN BREAK THROUGH HIS HIDE, BUT...

LILI ZHONG WAS TRAINED BY THE MOST ACCOMPLISHED MARTIAL MASTERS OF MACAO.

ONCE, SHE CRIPPLED TEN TAIWANESE CONSTABLES-WITH HER HANDS BOUND!

THUNK!

LILI ZHONG IS GOOD--

WHUMP!

--BUT SHE IS ONLY HUMAN.

THUD! CHOP!

WHAK!

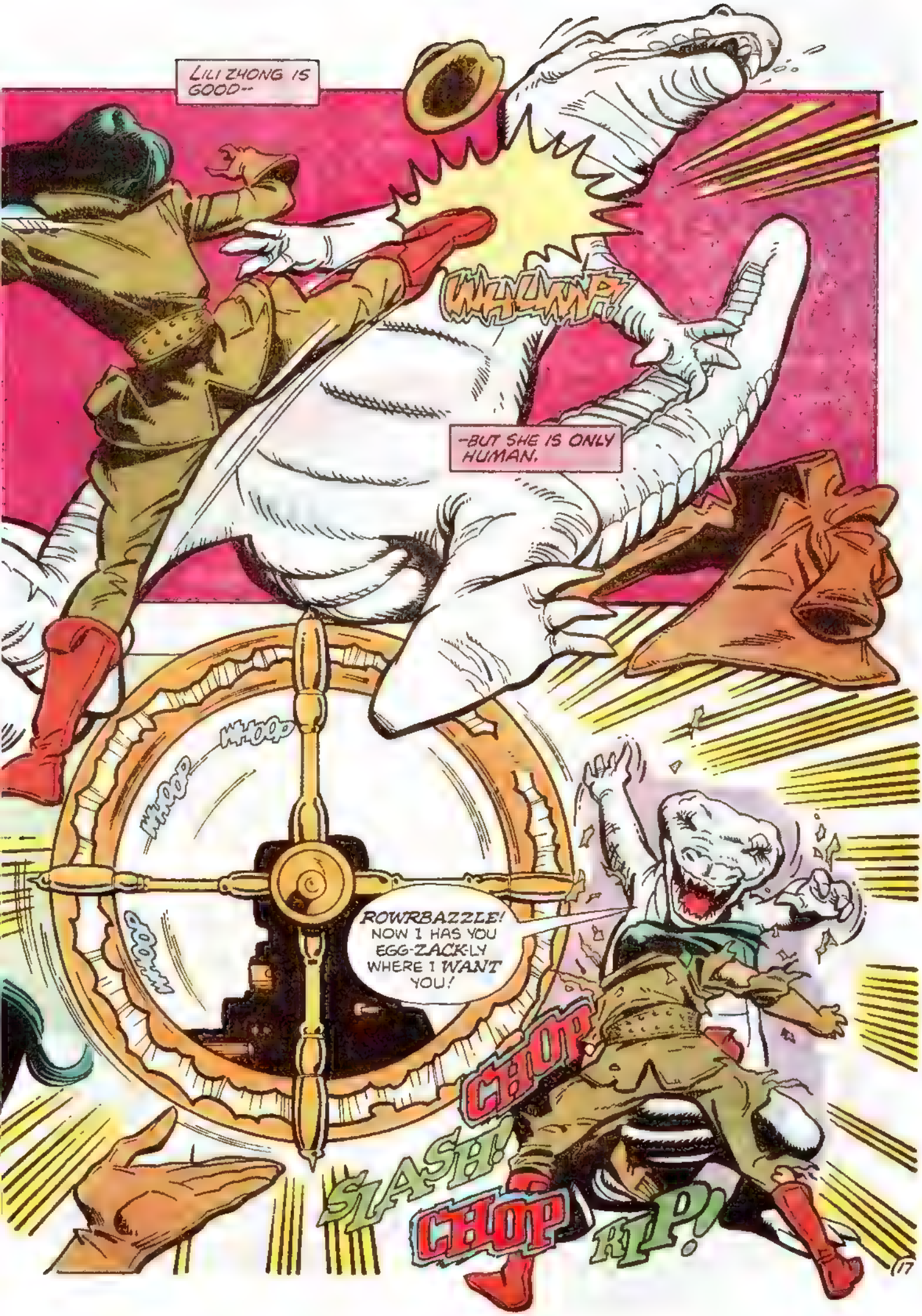
LIL' FOOL! DO YOU *REALLY* THINK YOU CAN DEFEAT A MUTANT *ALLIGATOR*?

HE'S RIGHT! THERE'S NO WAY I CAN BREAK THROUGH HIS HIDE, BUT...

WHOOP WHOOP WHOOP

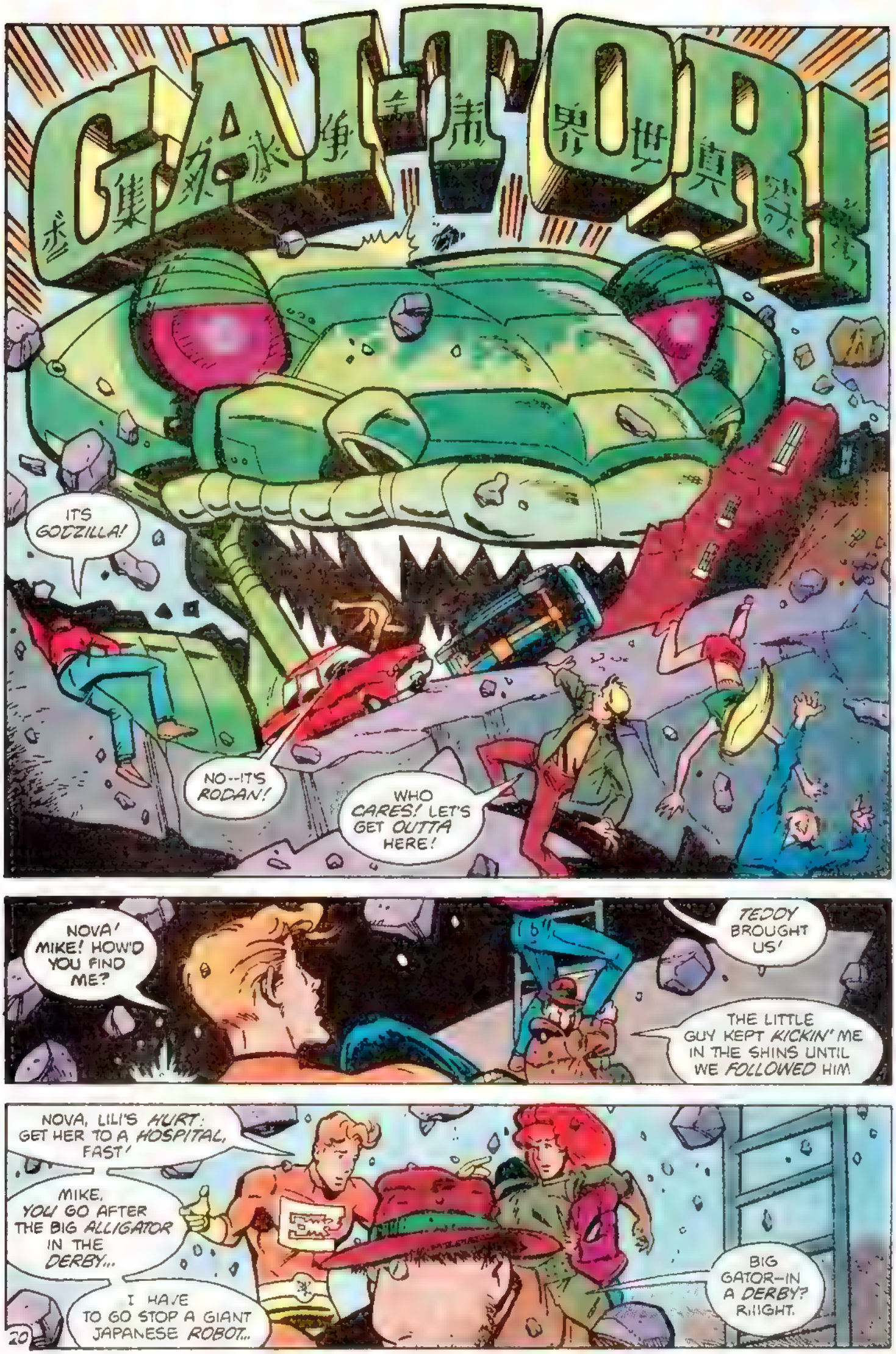
ROWRBAZZLE! NOW I HAS YOU EGG-ZACK-LY WHERE I *WANT* YOU!

CHOP SLASH! CHOP RIP!


LILI ZHONG IS GOOD--
WHUMP!
-BUT SHE IS ONLY HUMAN.
WHOOP
WHOOP
WHOOP
ROWRBAZZLE! NOW I HAS YOU EGG-ZACK-LY WHERE I WANT YOU!
CHOP
SLASH
CHOP
RIP!

WHOOP
WHOOP
LOSING BLOOD... NOT GOING TO. LAST LONG!
TIME FER YOU TO DIE!
I'M GOING TO BITE YER DOGBONED HEAD CLEAN OFF!
E-MAN...
WHOOP
...E-MAN...
WHOOOP
WHOOOOP
WHOOOOP
ROAWWRRR!
E-MAN!
CRASH!
ZZOLLT!
YOWWW!
18

WHOA! UH...WHA..
WOOZY FROM ALL THAT SPINNING...HARD TO CONCENTRATE...
E-MAN...
TYGER LILI...YOU SET ME FREE-?
YOU'RE OUR ONLY HOPE...
HUH?
BIG AL... MUTANT ALLIGATOR... GOING TO KILL... EVERYBODY...
GET HIM... HANDSOME... UHH!
HAH! THEY IS MORE'N ONE WAY TO END THE WORLD AS YOU KNOWS IT!
BEEEP
RRRRUMMBLLE
WHILST LILI WAS IN JAIL, I HAD HER TECHNICIANS WORKIN' ON ANOTHER PROJECK! SEE WHAT YOU THINK OF--


GATOR!
IT'S GODZILLA!
NO--IT'S RODAN!
WHO CARES! LET'S GET OUTTA HERE!
NOVA! MIKE! HOW'D YOU FIND ME?
TEDDY BROUGHT US!
THE LITTLE GUY KEPT KICKIN' ME IN THE SHINS UNTIL WE FOLLOWED HIM
NOVA, LILI'S HURT: GET HER TO A HOSPITAL, FAST!
MIKE, YOU GO AFTER THE BIG ALLIGATOR IN THE DERBY...
I HAVE TO GO STOP A GIANT JAPANESE ROBOT...
BIG GATOR--IN A DERBY? RIIIGHT.

FIRST NOTES

DEATH OF AN ARTFORM

One of the great American artforms — according to some historians, the only genuine American artform — is on its last legs. The prognosis is terminal, so please forgive me if I'm jumping the gun with the eulogy.

Without the newspaper comic strips, there would be no comic books. There would be no Star Wars, as the initial movie was nothing more than a glitzy imitation of the Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers serials — both based upon the classic comics strips.

Comic books started out as reprint vehicles for the newspaper strips. It was only after publishers ran out of reprintable material that they decided to create their own stuff.

No, it isn't the newspaper comic strip that is dying — it is the *continuity* strip, the so-called story or adventure strip: the ones that tell a story on a day-by-day basis. The *direct* precursor of the comic book.

Humor strips started in the late 1800's...although many of them had a great deal of continuity. It really wasn't until the 1920's that the adventure strip got its start: Captain Easy (then known as Wash Tubbs), Little Orphan Annie and Popeye were among the first.

Today, the papers are filled with "humor" strips, most of which are ground out by studio factories with interchangeable writers and artists. The people who bring us Beetle Bailey and Hagar the Horrible are also responsible for a half-dozen other strips. The people who create B.C. and The Wizard of ID also do a few others. And so on and on. House style has given way to appalling redundancy.

And among all this, the continuity strip has been lost in the shuffle. Due to the rising cost of newsprint, high-priced columnists and publisher's "business" lunches, most papers have had to cut back the amount of space given to each specific strip: today, a storyteller has about half the space he once had in which to tell a story. The astonishing artwork of Alex Raymond (Flash Gordon), Milton Caniff (Terry and the Pirates), Roy Crane (Capt. Easy and Buz Sawyer) and numerous others simply wouldn't be reproducable today.

It seems most syndicate editors are operating out of left field. Whereas the continuity strips used to be the primary inducement for a reader to buy the paper day after day, today's continuity strips are edited so a reader could miss any three days during the week — and the Saturday strip is never anything more than filler. Stories usually ran 13 weeks and occassionally ran the better part of a year — today eight to 10 weeks is the norm.

These editors say readers don't want continuity strips anymore. Small wonder.

Scrooge-like publishers and asinine editors aren't the whole cause of the problem. In all fairness, the ancient strips have been kept on long past their prime in the hands of writers and artists who have given up the fight for aesthetic sufficiency. It's easier to sign your pay check than it is to fight the system and turn out good continuity.

There are some guys who are fighting the good fight — and I'll just mention four. Dick Moores has been turning out classic work on Gasoline Alley — he's turned the very limitations of the medium into his greatest strengths. Leonard Starr has lent his considerable talents to the successful revival of Annie; whereas his strip lacks the self-determination of the classic Little Orphan Annie (it is clear Starr's Annie never even met the original), the strip is wonderful on his own merits.

Writer Max Collins has managed to take the horrible deteriorating Dick Tracy and quickly restore it to its position as the foremost detective strip; no mean feat. Unfortunately, the artwork in recent years has been less than competent. And finally, Archie Goodwin and Al Williamson have accomplished the near-impossible: they have taken the aforementioned Star Wars and put it on a level with Flash Gordon, its source material. Goodwin and Williamson's Star Wars strip has been vastly more interesting than the last two movies.

There are other good continuity strips — Rudy, The Lone Ranger, Popeye — but they aren't in very many papers.

What can we do about it all? Short of toasting marshmallows on the funeral pyre, we can support those continuity strips we like. The next time your local newspaper drops a strip you enjoy, do not waste any time in calling the publisher and complaining. Follow up with a nasty letter. Call up the advertising departments of the paper's major advertisers and tell them exactly why you won't be seeing their newspaper ads anymore.

Let's do all we can to keep this important part of American cultural history alive. As comic fans, we owe it to the medium.

— Mike Gold

ON SALE NOW

American Flagg #6 — The high-flying conclusion to **Howard Chaykin's** three-part underground Brazillian basketball epic "Southern Comfort."

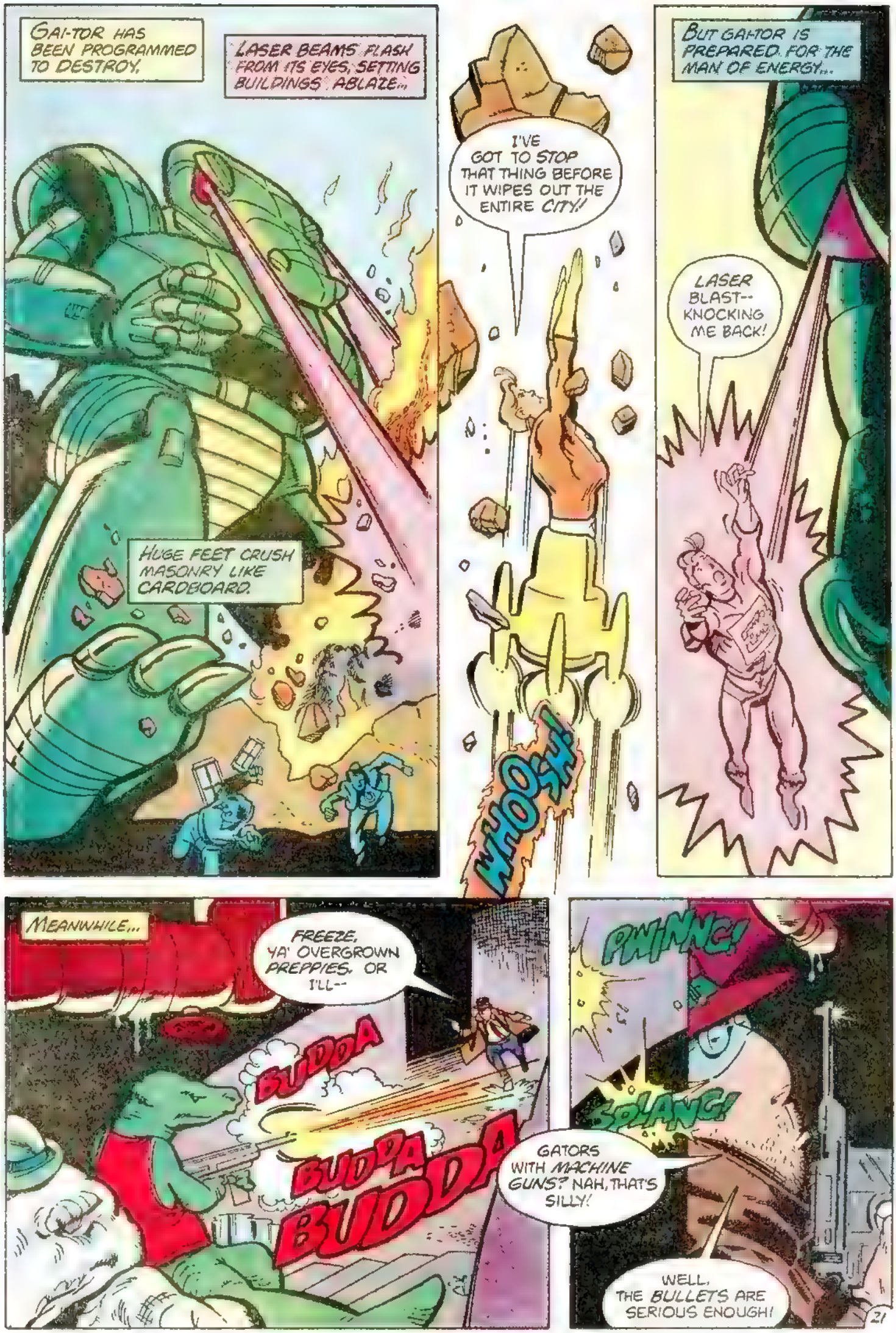
E-Man #12 — The return of Tyger Lili! Plus a new baddie lurking in "The Sewer of Doom!" Written and pencilled by **Joe Staton**, inked by **Rick Burchett.**

Jon Sable, Freelance #10 — "Triptych," a hard look at B.B. Flemm, Sonny Pratt, Eden Kendall and Jon Sable, courtesy of writer/artist **Mike Grell.**

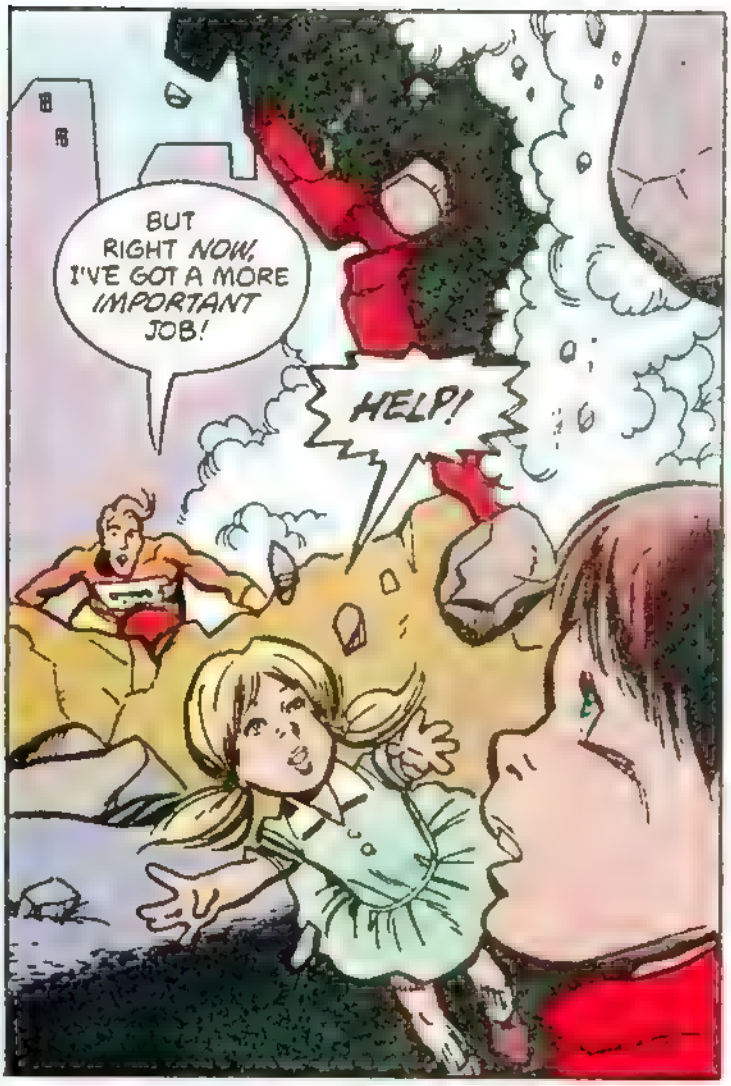
Mars #3 — Will Morgana Trace become the red planet? Find out in "Transformer", by **Mark Wheatley** and **Marc Hempel.** And the second part of the Black Flame saga, "The Hellequin Ride!" by **Peter Gillis**, **Tom Sutton** and **Bruce Patterson.**

Starslayer #14 — Torin and Crew reach Cynosure, and **Timothy Truman** takes over the penciller/inker chores. Plus Grimjack, of course, by **John Ostrander** and **Truman.**

Warp #11: Cumulus goes home, Sargon leaves home, and Chaos takes over home, all from the minds of **Peter Gillis, Jerry Bingham and Mike Gustovich.** Not to mention The Outrider, chapter two, by **Gillis** and **Lenin Delsol.**

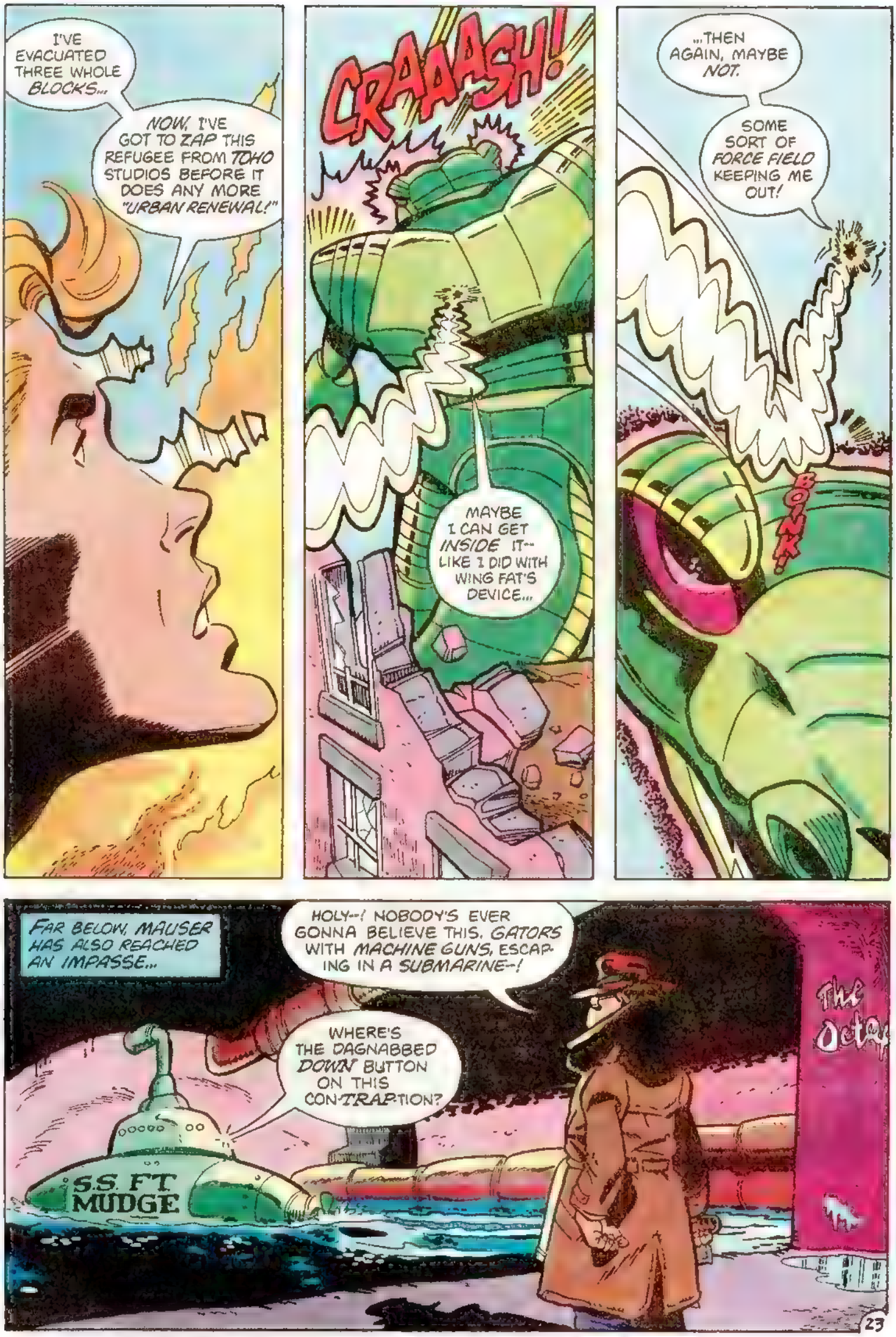

GAI-TOR HAS BEEN PROGRAMMED TO DESTROY.
LASER BEAMS FLASH FROM ITS EYES, SETTING BUILDINGS ABLAZE...
HUGE FEET CRUSH MASONRY LIKE CARDBOARD.
I'VE GOT TO STOP THAT THING BEFORE IT WIPES OUT THE ENTIRE CITY!
WHOOSH!
BUT GAI-TOR IS PREPARED FOR THE MAN OF ENERGY...
LASER BLAST-- KNOCKING ME BACK!
MEANWHILE...
FREEZE, YA' OVERGROWN PREPPIES, OR I'LL--
BUDDA
BUDDA BUDDA
PWINNG!
SOLANG!
GATORS WITH MACHINE GUNS? NAH, THAT'S SILLY!
WELL, THE BULLETS ARE SERIOUS ENOUGH!

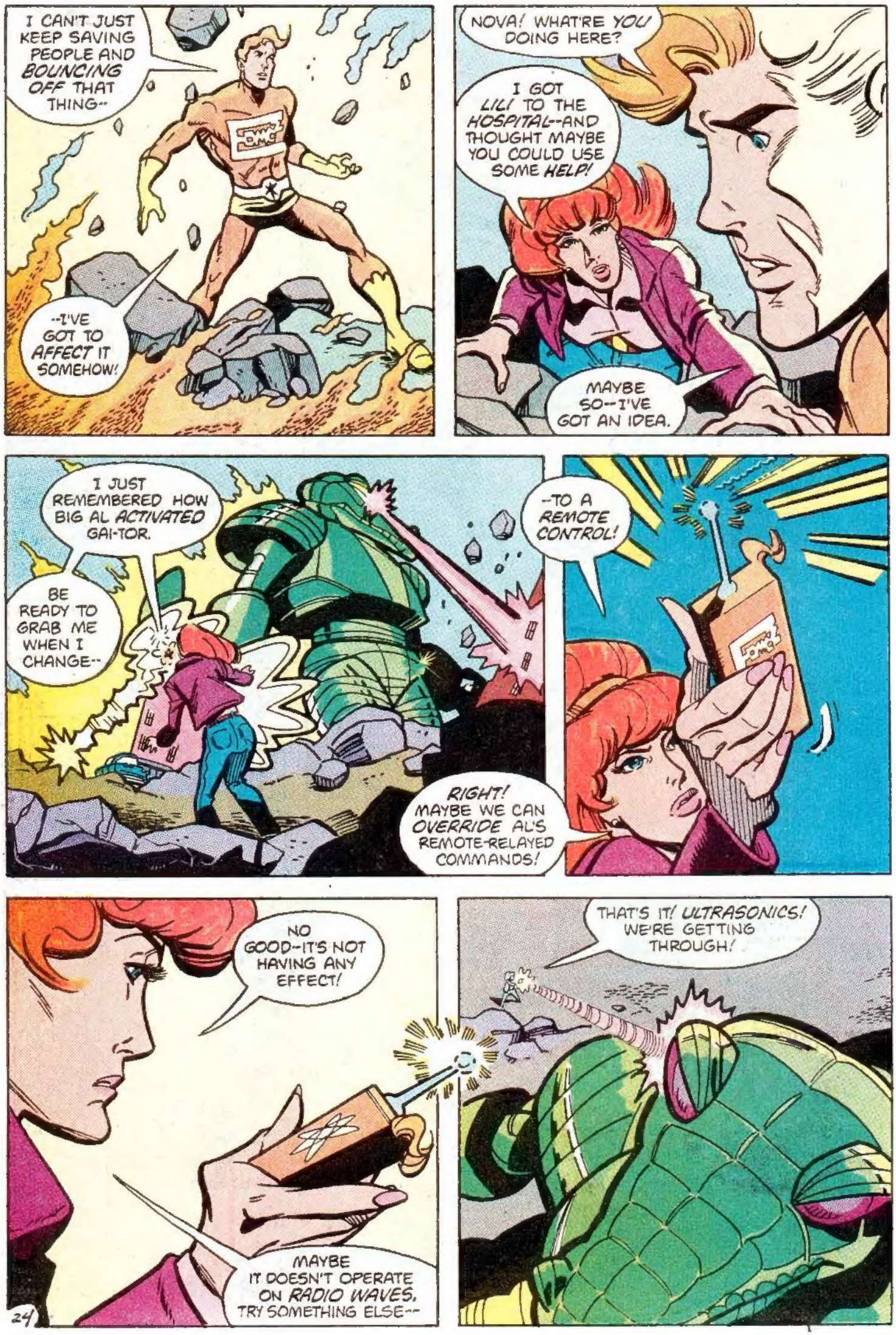
ZZZZZZT!
WHOOM!
UNNH! ..WASN'T PREPARED FOR THAT LASER... I'LL HAVE TO TRY ANOTHER TACTIC--


BUT RIGHT NOW, I'VE GOT A MORE IMPORTANT JOB!
HELP!

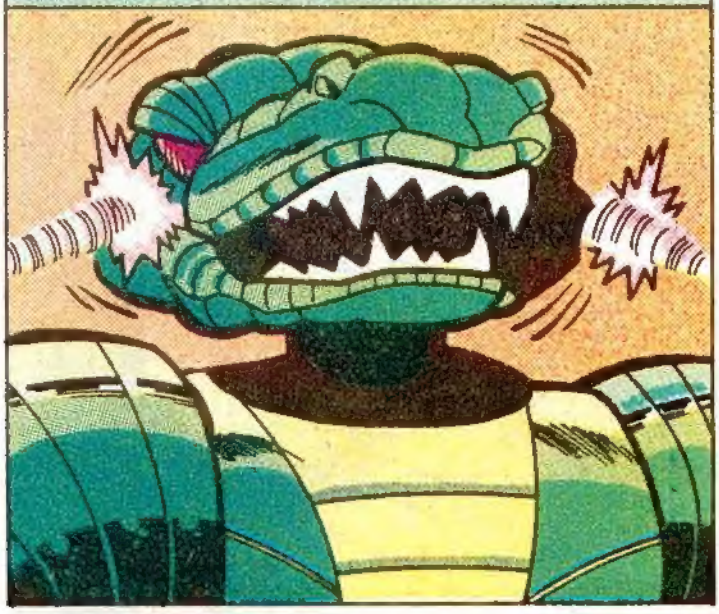
DON'T WORRY, KIDS- I'VE GOT YOU COVERED!
THUMP
THUD
BUMP
OH, WOW- EMAN!

I THINK YOU'LL BE SAFER OVER HERE.
WHEEE!


I'VE EVACUATED THREE WHOLE BLOCKS...
NOW, I'VE GOT TO ZAP THIS REFUGEE FROM TOHO STUDIOS BEFORE IT DOES ANY MORE "URBAN RENEWAL!"
CRAAASH!
MAYBE I CAN GET INSIDE IT-- LIKE I DID WITH WING FAT'S DEVICE...
...THEN AGAIN, MAYBE NOT.
SOME SORT OF FORCE FIELD KEEPING ME OUT!
BOINK!
FAR BELOW, MAUSER HAS ALSO REACHED AN IMPASSE...
HOLY--! NOBODY'S EVER GONNA BELIEVE THIS. GATORS WITH MACHINE GUNS, ESCAPING IN A SUBMARINE--!
WHERE'S THE DAGNABBED DOWN BUTTON ON THIS CON-TRAP-TION?
S.S. FT MUDGE
The Octo
23

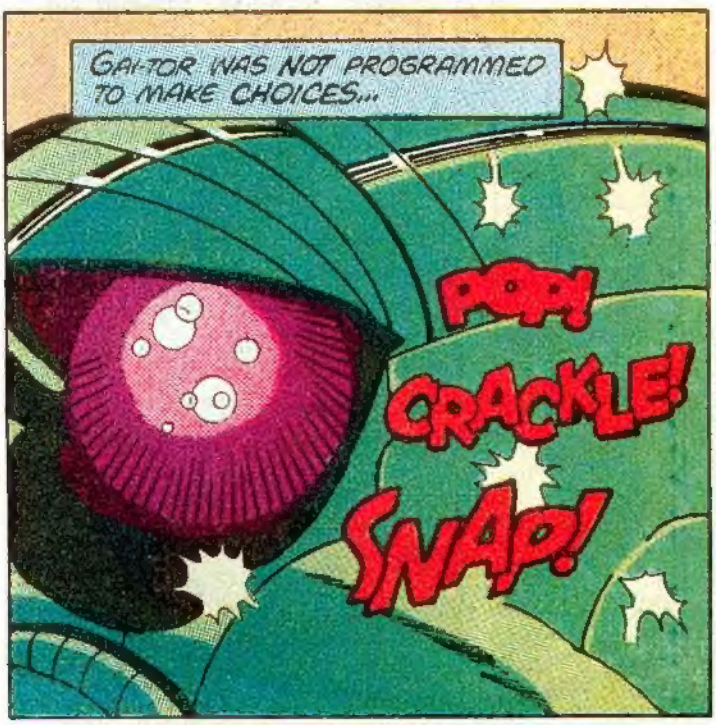

I CAN'T JUST KEEP SAVING PEOPLE AND BOUNCING OFF THAT THING--
--I'VE GOT TO AFFECT IT SOMEHOW!
NOVA! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
I GOT LILI TO THE HOSPITAL--AND THOUGHT MAYBE YOU COULD USE SOME HELP!
MAYBE SO--I'VE GOT AN IDEA.
I JUST REMEMBERED HOW BIG AL ACTIVATED GAI-TOR.
BE READY TO GRAB ME WHEN I CHANGE--
--TO A REMOTE CONTROL!
RIGHT! MAYBE WE CAN OVERRIDE AL'S REMOTE-RELAYED COMMANDS!
NO GOOD--IT'S NOT HAVING ANY EFFECT!
MAYBE IT DOESN'T OPERATE ON RADIO WAVES. TRY SOMETHING ELSE--
THAT'S IT! ULTRASONICS! WE'RE GETTING THROUGH!

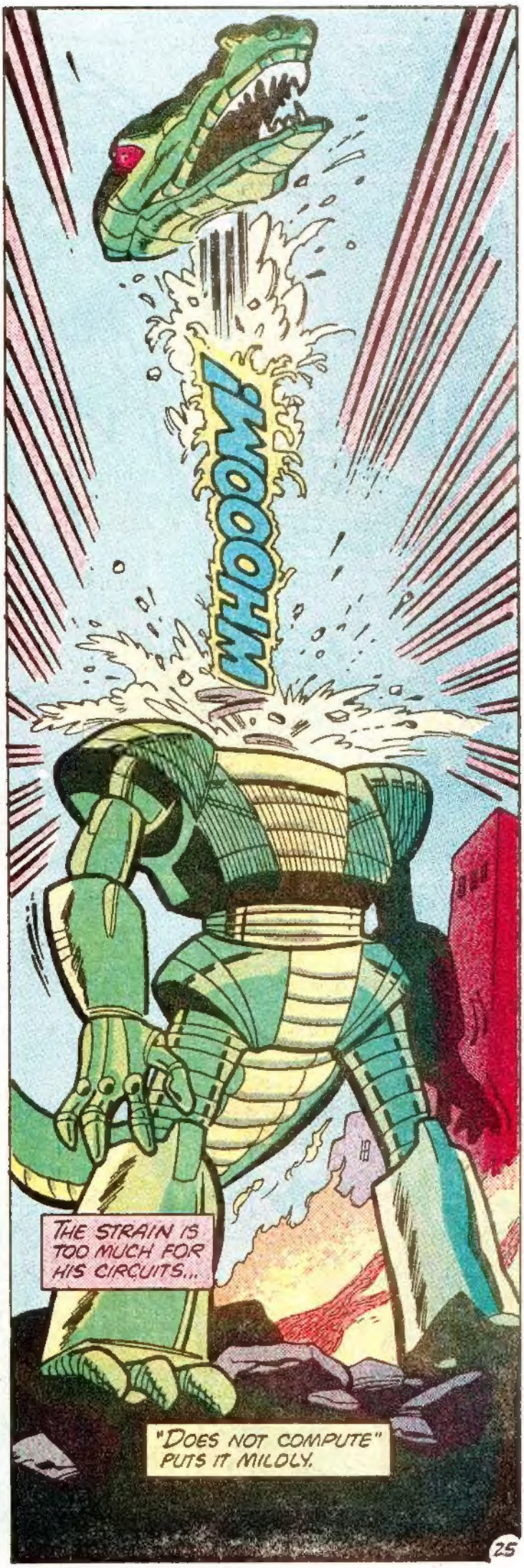
GAI-TOR HALTS, CONFUSED, AS OPPOSING SIGNALS FIGHT FOR CONTROL IN HIS MICRO-PROCESSED BRAIN...

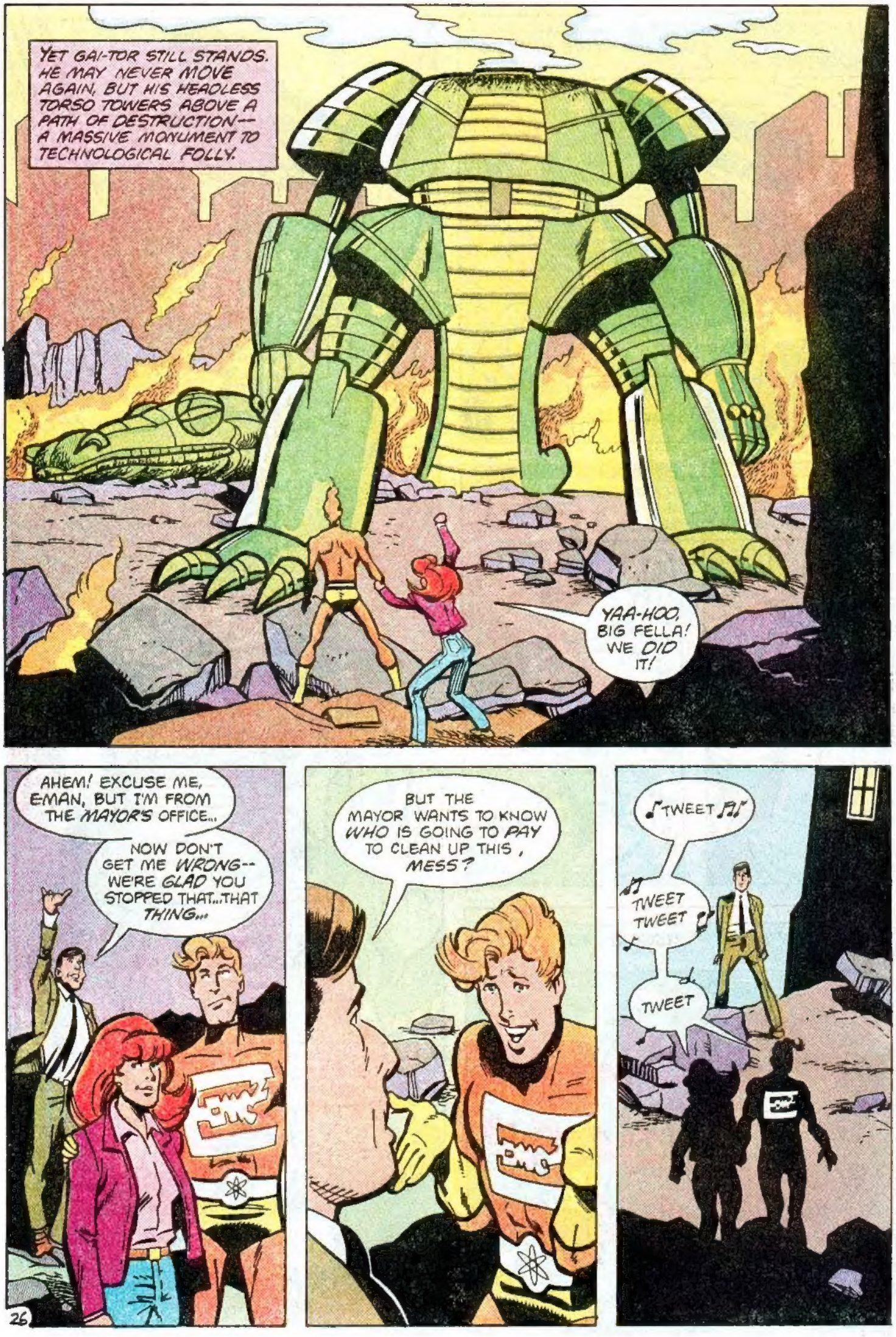


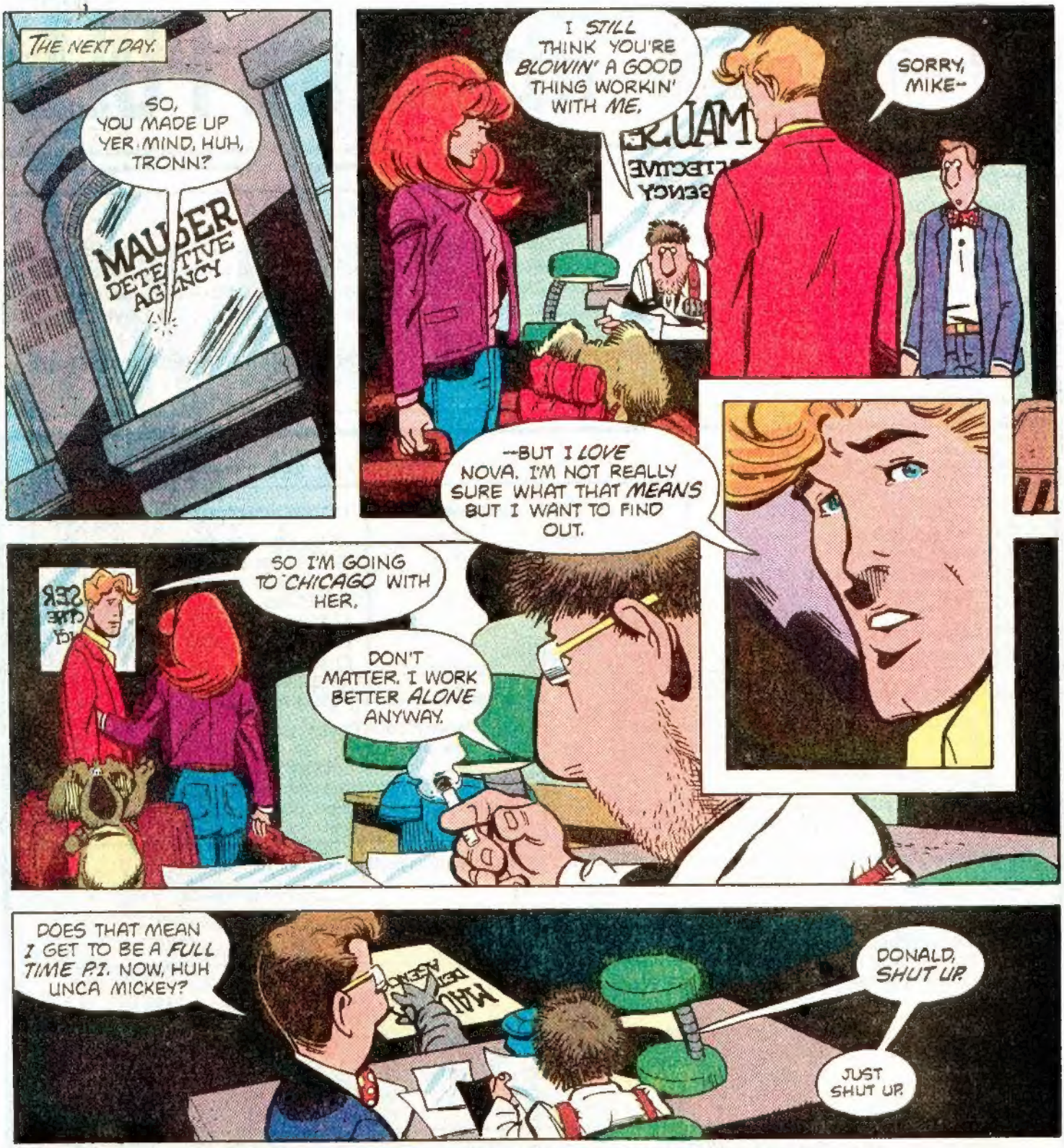
LIKE SOME DEADLY ELECTRONIC GAME, E-MAN AND BIG AL TAKE TURNS COUNTER-MANDING EACH OTHER'S ORDERS...

GAI-TOR WAS NOT PROGRAMMED TO MAKE CHOICES...






YET GAI-TOR STILL STANDS. HE MAY NEVER MOVE AGAIN, BUT HIS HEADLESS TORSO TOWERS ABOVE A PATH OF DESTRUCTION— A MASSIVE MONUMENT TO TECHNOLOGICAL FOLLY.
YAA-HOO, BIG FELLA! WE DID IT!
AHEM! EXCUSE ME, E-MAN, BUT I'M FROM THE MAYOR'S OFFICE...
NOW DON'T GET ME WRONG-- WE'RE GLAD YOU STOPPED THAT...THAT THING...
BUT THE MAYOR WANTS TO KNOW WHO IS GOING TO PAY TO CLEAN UP THIS, MESS?
TWEET
TWEET TWEET
TWEET


THE NEXT DAY.
SO, YOU MADE UP YER MIND, HUH, TRONN?
MAUSER DETECTIVE AGENCY
I STILL THINK YOU'RE BLOWIN' A GOOD THING WORKIN' WITH ME.
SORRY, MIKE-
--BUT I LOVE NOVA. I'M NOT REALLY SURE WHAT THAT MEANS BUT I WANT TO FIND OUT.
SO I'M GOING TO CHICAGO WITH HER.
DON'T MATTER. I WORK BETTER ALONE ANYWAY.
DOES THAT MEAN I GET TO BE A FULL TIME P.I. NOW, HUH UNCA MICKEY?
DONALD, SHUT UP.
JUST SHUT UP.
MAUSER DETECTIVE AGENCY
MAYBE I'LL MISS THE BEAR A LITTLE.
MAYBE.

NEXT:
A TOWN CALLED
CHAOS?